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Rwanda: Foreign Minister Meets MOG Commander; Cease-Fire Holding

EA1602221993 Kigali Radiodiffusion Nationale de la Republique
Rwandaise in French 1800 GMT 16 Feb 93

[Text] After a meeting with Foreign Minister Boniface Ngulinzira, General Opaley, the commander of the neutral Military Observer Group [MOG] in Rwanda, stressed that it was a matter of urgency that his group be strengthened with additional staff and adequate equipment in order to cope with the new situation caused by the resumption of fighting, which had led to the modification of positions.

The foreign minister called on the MOG commander to confirm to the Rwandan Patriotic Front that the government was ready to take part in a bilateral meeting at the highest level. The meeting had been suggested by the Tanzanian facilitator. Dar es Salaam wants the meeting to take place between next 18 and 21 February. The Rwandan delegation will be led at Dar es Salaam by Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye himself.

It is clear, however, that the meeting will not take place as a substitute to the real negotiations: It is only to help the resumption of the talks. It must particularly give the facilitator and observers firm guarantees that the two sides will respect their commitments and show genuine willingness to conclude a peace agreement.

On the Dar es Salaam meeting, the president today sent his principal private secretary, Enoch Ruhigira, to the Tanzanian capital to his counterpart Ali Hassan Mwinyi.

[Kigali Radiodiffusion Nationale de la Republique Rwandaise in French at 1800 GMT on 16 February also reports: "No gunfire at all was heard for the whole day in Mutara region. Although the rebels [inkotanyi] have not fired, they are still in the area, especially in Ngarama, where our troops and Rwandan Patriotic Front [RPF] fighters are facing each other.

["Panic continues to prevail among the people who continue fleeing from the region. From Murambi to Gituza, war-displaced people are moving en masse, looking for safe refuges in fear of a possible resumption of hostilities.

["Ngarama town center is totally deserted, without a single sign of life. All the buildings, houses, offices, and shops have been destroyed by bombs. Looting, which followed the fighting, left the town center in total ruins. The Ngarama Gendarmerie building has

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also been damaged as the result of successive attacks by the rebels. Today's truce has allowed some Ngarama displaced people to return to their homes to collect food supplies and household equipment.

["The truce seems then to be holding in certain regions since it came into force at midnight. On behalf of the OAU secretary general, the Military Observer Group [MOG] commander, General Opaley, has called on the two sides to make sincere efforts to observe the truce and give negotiations a chance. In a communique, Gen. Opaley declares that the MOG will consider as violation of the truce any movement out of the present positions, all gunfire, all

mine-laying, and any presence of foreign troops in the fighting zones. In this context, the MOG commander will get in touch with the government, the RPF and the OAU and also with military officials of the forces in the field to request their help in monitoring the truce."]

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